

Dissertation
on
The Causes, Symptoms and Treatment
of
amenorrhœa
Submitted as
An Inaugural Thesis
For
The Degree of Doctor of Medicine

By Elias Mills Napier

of
Nashville Tennessee

1872

The
Framingham Institution
The
Office of the
Superintendent
of the
Institution
at the
Framingham
Institution

Trustees
Univ

An

NO 2

Inaugural Dissertation
For

The Degree
of

Doctor of Medicine
Submitted

To the Examination

of

John Andrews M.D. Provost

The

Trustees and Medical Professors
of The
University of Pennsylvania

x

76

The
that brief
in and o
the female
or they ha
the monst
Constitutions
by its ca
that we sho
causes, sym
Ameno
absence of the
vided into
understood
which exists
their usual

An Essay &c.

In the following pages it is proposed to treat briefly of the Disease called by Doctor Cullen and others Amenorrhœa. To this Disease the female sex are continually subject after they have arrived to that age at which the menstrual discharge is instituted; and their constitutions frequently suffer considerable ravages by its continuance. It is then highly necessary that we should be completely acquainted with its causes, symptoms and treatment

Amenorrhœa which strictly signifies an absence of the menstrual discharge, has been divided into two kinds—Retention by which is understood that unnatural state of the system which exists when the menses do not appear at their usual or proper period of life. and Suppres-

(Ms. 3. 10. 11)

sion which
return by a
that age a
distinction
use in lea

It is not
period. Retard
the age at
appear, in
countries, a
In our
period of
tenth year
sooner and
without the
of Disease
then we re
from dole
and the li

sion which is the stoppage of their periodical return by any other cause than conception, before that age at which they naturally disappear. This distinction however does not seem to be of much use in leading us to the cure.

It is not possible for us to say at what period Retention of the menses may occur, as the age at which they naturally should appear, varies in different climates, and countries, and in different constitutions. In our climate however the most frequent period of their occurrence, is about the fourteenth year. Sometimes they occur much sooner and at other times much later without their absence producing any symptoms of Disease. Neither is it easy for us to say when we may suspect suppression, merely from dates; as the period of their recurrence and the time of their final cessation varies considerably.

considerably in
daily occur
the by days, and
days untill the
ly about the p
however are p
and from them
stomach we can
labours unde

The most

1 The unusual
the sedative,
unrecept love,

2 severe can
most atmospher
in ball rooms

3 The repeated

4 any injur
whatever To

3
considerably in different individuals. They most generally occur periodically, ~~every~~ twenty eight or thirty days, and continue to flow for two or three days untill their ~~final~~ cessation which is generally about the forty eighth or fiftieth year. These estimates however are far from being uniformly correct; and from them therefore without other circumstances we can not possibly say that a patient labours under suppression.

The most usual causes are

- 1 The unusual operation of any one or more of the sedative passions and emotions as grief, fear, unsuccessful love, great anxiety &c. &c.
- 2 Severe catarrhs, and exposure to a cold and moist atmosphere directly after being confined in ball rooms and other crowded assemblies.
- 3 The repeated and too liberal use of acids.
- 4 Any injuries to the general health from any cause whatever. To these I might add a great many others

are particular
How whether
tion will pro
Retention
and observa
divide, but

The dis
period of life
begins to app
ention; and
is directed
For in most
being the cause
they to aggr
more violent

The follo
the age of men
confirmation
a struggle

and particularly the fashionable dresses of the day.
Now whether or not those causes acting on the sys-
tem will produce at different times both

Retention and suppression, my experience
and observation are not such as to enable me to
decide, but I think it most likely that they do.

The diseases of females occurring about that
period of life when the menstrual flux discharge
begins to appear, should command our earliest at-
tention; and our first ~~inquiry~~ inquiry should
be so directed as to ascertain the state of the Uterus.

For in most cases we may suspect Retention as
being the cause, or in some degree having a ten-
dency to aggravate and make the complaint
more violent in its nature.

The following symptoms (if appearing about
the age of menstruation) will very much add to the
confirmation of our suspicions on this point.

A sluggishness and frequent sense of lassitude.

while, been
 the whole to
 and perhaps
 with Adm.
 is worried
 the heart is
 .ack some
 the back, s
 of dyspepsia
 a natural ap
 symptom, w
 It is common
 in discha
 most often
 the appetite
 .rices abo
 his followers
 in support
 medicines ne
 my house to
 finance: as
 any kind of

and daily occurs, and the countenance becomes
colour, becomes pale and sometimes of a yellowish hue,
the whole body becomes pale and flaccid, an ague
and perhaps a great part of the body becomes affected
with Adematous swellings, the Breathing becomes
is hurried by, any quick or laborious exercise,
the heart is liable to palpitation and syncope, a head
-ach sometimes occurs, but more certainly pains in
the back, loins and haunches; various symptoms
of Dyspepsia appear sometimes attended with loss
- natural appetite. This last is a very extraordinary
symptom, which has not been hitherto explained.
It sometimes accompanies every cessation of the Men-
-strual discharge, but frequently appears in the
most violent degree in pregnancy. In young women
the appetite for lime, rubbish, charcoal and vari-
ous absorbents is the most prevalent. Stahl &
his followers made great use of this circumstance
in supporting their favourite opinion of the vis
medicatrix naturae. I would be happy if it were in
my power to treat of this Disease from my own ex-
perience: as it is not I will merely venture to express
my opinion of it, and then speak of such remedies as
may

and decreases
appears with
skin and then
to bleed a little
and cooling no
action is subse

The Reten
ticularly in the
the country air
game in venery
have all been
ing a more cop

Then next to
entering upon
ruption of the
ken place is n
explosion, for the
once is not alway
last course, and
pen men after the

may be, or seem best calculated for.

Retention depends for two causes (viz) increased and decreased action. In increased action which appears with quick and tense pulse, dry and hot skin and other symptoms of fever, it would be proper to bleed a little at a time and give cathartics of cooling nature untill the force of the uterine action is subdued or moderated.

The Retention depending upon weak action particularly in the uterine vessels, moderate exercise in the country air walking dancing and moderate intercourse in venery (when circumstances do not forbid) have all been recommended. These all act by occasioning a more copious determination of blood to the uterus.

I am next to consider the Cure of suppression. In entering upon this I must observe that every interruption of the menstrual discharge after it has taken place is not to be considered as a case of suppression, for the catamenia upon its first appearance is not always immediately established in its regular course, and therefore if an interruption should happen soon after the first appearance; or even with in
the

the course of the
it may be con-
when the Disease
more to that
various symptoms
after arising from
off by the Uterus
to other parts,
these hemor-

Since he
stomach, and
gout of Muscles
are commonly
produced by the
fever, nausea,
belly, quick action
of sleep and

The remedies
with great of a
most successful
of Warm
the Mercurial Doc-
trine, and his

7
the course of the first or perhaps the second year,
it may be considered as a case of Retention; especially
when the Disease appears with the symptoms most com-
mon to that state. Suppression is attended with va-
rious symptoms in different parts of the body, very
often arising from the blood which should have passed
off by the Uterus, being determined more copiously
to other parts, and often with such force as to pro-
duce hemorrhage in them.

Hence hemorrhages from the nose, lungs,
stomach, and other parts have appeared in conse-
quence of Suppression of menstruation. Besides these there
are commonly Hysteria; and Dyspeptic symptoms
produced by the same cause; as also flushing of the
face, nausea, vomiting, colic pains, with a bow-
belly, quick and tense pulse, Cardialgia, thirst, want
of Sleep and Dyspnea.

The remedies used in this disease are numerous,
will treat of a few of them which have been reputed
most successful.

Of Warm bathing applied to the region of
the Uterus Doctor Cullen seems to think very favour-
ably, and has ranked it as fore most in his list of

Part should be
bathing alone,
it may be purgative

Doctor all

Hellbore in
in doses of two
line of other re
given as recom
to four tea spo
least relief

Compro
spoken of as
On the recom

Dr Home m
quels passed re
sufficient, and

to the lower e
a large quantity
of treatment

of many. But
in proportion

ing and curing
of six cases

fect of this pr
success which

But should not think it safe to risk the trial of a
bathing alone, tho' it may be a very important aux-
iliary to purging blood letting &c.

Doctor Mead recommended the tincture of black
Hellebore in very favourable terms. He gave it
in doses of two tea-spoons-full a day. In the prac-
tice of other respectable medical men, it has been
given as recommended by Mead and even enlarged
to four tea spoons full a day without affording the
least relief.

Compressing the Crural Artery has been
spoken of as a valuable remedy in Amenorrhoea.
On the recommendation of Doctor Hamilton
Dr Home made six or eight trials with tourni-
quets passed round the thighs making compression
sufficient, in part; to impede the passage of blood
to the lower extremities, and in that way to cause
a turgescence of the vessels of the uterus. The mode
of treatment no doubt accords with the theory
of many. But a remedy should always be esteemed
in proportion to its efficacy in preventing, relieving
and curing diseases, when tested by experience.

Of six cases in which Doctor Home tries the ef-
fect of this practice one only was attended with
success which is a very small proportion, certainly not
sufficient

is subject the
of composition
the strongest
the uterus is
ilar to those

calamities
that heavy
kind that it
the case. The
plethora and
in all such
ful and short
effects of ven
ges are stro
cases arising
decreased art
culiarly well
to in all such

edies do not

Rubia

very highly of
the menses
has procured

to support the character of any remedy. From the
of compression as described by Doctor Home, is the
the strongest appearance of loading the vessels of
the Uterus with blood; as the symptoms are sim-
ilar to those which indicate the approach of the
catamenia. In deed this remedy was so pleasant
that many Physicians were sanguine in the be-
lief that it would succeed, but this was not
the case. The Uterus I suppose is often in too
plithoric and inflammatory a state; consequently
in all such cases this remedy will prove to be hurt-
ful and should never be resorted to. The good
effects of venesection, pediluvium, and pur-
ges are strong proofs of it. The in particular
cases arising from inaction and debility with
decreased arterial action, I should think spe-
cially well adapted and should be resorted
to in all such cases where the more common reme-
dies do not succeed.

Rubia Tinctorum Tournefort has spoken
very highly of the efficacy of madder in provoking
the menses at a very early period. Doctor Home
has favoured us with a statement of fifteen or twenty
cases

to be content
was preceded
represented by
not any one
that he has

metagognus
the allowance
Patient which
Some it is
is too often
in medicine
in times too

Sabina

painful offe
procure abo
of those who
less hemorrh
true it is no
of a Physi
happy circum
does were o
with this un
that are too

to the extent of four or six drachms a day, which was preceded by the exhibition of an emetic. Horn represented this practice as being preferable to most any other. But it appears quite probably that his treatment of ~~this~~ ~~her~~ efficacy as an emmenagogue in terms too favourable, and not that allowance for the influence of the emetic on the Patient which he ought to have done. With Dr

Horne it was a newly discovered remedy, and it is too often the case that we see recent discoveries in medicine as well as in all other science, spoken of in terms too exalted and extravagant.

Sabina or Savin. This is notorious for its powerful effects on the Uterus. It is often used to procure abortions and is said to endanger the lives of those who use it for that purpose, by the violent hemorrhage which it provokes. In many countries it is not allowed to be sold unless by the order of a Physician. It would be a favourable and happy circumstance for the Citizens of the United States were such a rule rigorously adhered to with this and many other medicines of the kind, that are too often resorted to by persons who are ignorant

natural birth
even when
standing,
used by man
in cases of
of 1/2 and in
or three times
it most, prud
and increase
the patient a

Electric

through the r
others have be
of Amenorrhoea
sily has in a
and the power
and to think
latter cases of
on great deb

Blood

of this ~~men~~
uses have
it when the pe
forbid its use.

rant of medicine. It has been much used to promote natural birth, and is reputed a strong emmenagogue even when externally applied to the skin. Notwithstanding the power of this medicine it has been used by many authors with the happiest effect in cases of Amenorrhoea, beginning with the dose of $\mathfrak{z}\text{ss}$ and increasing to $\mathfrak{z}\text{j}$ of the powder two or three times a day; but I should suppose it most prudent to begin with smaller doses and increase gradually to the quantity that the patient will be able to take with safety.

Electricity By passing electrical shocks through the region of the Uterus, Dr. Duncan & others have been very successful in the treatment of Amenorrhoea. The well known power that electricity has in increasing and restoring sensibility and the power of motion to other parts, induces me to think very favourably of its use in certain cases of Amenorrhoea, such as depend upon great debility and prostration of strength.

Bloodletting. The admirable effects of this ~~Remedy~~ Remedy in suppression of the menses have been witnessed by all who have used it when the pulse and other symptoms did not forbid its use. I believe that ten or twelve cases of

American
it, in some
one is of pro
plication of
tion to the

The
herpet
twooring
to the Prop
advantag
lectures.

I will also
acknowledg
self mus
to expect

Am
mind I
leaving a
in medi

of Americanha will require the use of the lancet, in small but frequent quantities. This practice is of primary importance but a proper application of it will require our strictest attention to the pulse and other symptoms.

The conclusion of this short and imperfect Essay gives me an opportunity of tendering my grateful acknowledgements to the Professors of this Institution, for the advantages I have derived from their lectures. To Professors Cox and — I will always feel a pleasure in offering acknowledgments for attention and politeness much greater than I had a right to expect.

Among the sensations arising in my mind I can not suppress my regret at leaving and bidding ~~my~~ public Instructors in medicine adieu.

